

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0011] with the following amended paragraph:

[0011] According to the invention, the rubber covering has a layer with compressible layer elements and a layer with elastic layer elements. The elastic layer elements are uniform in the circumferential direction and prestrained to varying degrees ~~[in the axial direction]~~ as a function of axial position so that the sleeve has a tangential ~~[elasticity]~~ stiffness (rigidity) profile which is symmetric with respect to the axial center of the sleeve.

Please replace paragraph [0012] with the following amended paragraph:

[0012] By virtue of the fact that, according to the invention, the ~~[elasticity]~~ stiffness of a rubber sleeve is modified across the web width and is not impaired in the circumferential direction, ~~[in which it is not impaired,]~~ it is firstly possible to influence the conveying characteristics across the paper-web width without, however, impairing the compressibility of the rubber sleeve.

Please replace paragraph [0015] with the following amended paragraph:

[0015] The single figure shows a rubber cylinder sleeve in cross section with a layer construction and the representation of profiles of the ~~[elasticity]~~ stiffness S (“circumferential rigidity” or “circumferential ~~[elasticity]~~ stiffness”).

Please replace paragraph [0018] with the following amended paragraph:

[0018] The construction of the layers comprises compressible layer elements 3 in the form of air inclusions, and elastic layer elements 4 which influence the ~~[elasticity]~~ stiffness in the form of filaments/fabric structures or yarns. The filaments are aligned approximately in the circumferential direction of the rubber cylinder sleeve and advantageously have a length of approximately 10 to 30 mm. It is also possible to provide compressible filaments instead of the air inclusions. The layer construction comprises, furthermore, a rubber material 5, as is customarily used for rubber blankets. As has already been described, for example, in ~~[DE 102 28 686.8, which corresponds to U.S. [Application Serial No. 10/606,544]~~ Patent No. 6,799,512, incorporated herein by reference, the filaments are not necessarily distributed uniformly in the layer 4. More air inclusions are arranged in the radial direction towards the carrier sleeve 1, while the filaments are arranged more closely in the radial direction towards the outer surface. Correspondingly, the ~~[elasticity]~~ stiffness S in the region of the thickness d of the layer increases towards the outside, while the relative compressibility K increases towards the carrier sleeve 1.

Please replace paragraph [0019] with the following amended paragraph:

[0019] It is, however, equally conceivable to arrange the filaments more closely in the layer 4 towards the outer surface, so that the ~~[elasticity]~~ stiffness S increases in this direction, and to distribute air inclusions uniformly, so that the radial compressibility is identical across the entire width of the layer 3.

Please replace paragraph [0020] with the following amended paragraph:

[0020] Further variations of arranging the compressible elements and the ~~[compressible]~~ filaments in the radial direction are possible. This is merely a preferred exemplary embodiment; the layer construction 2 can have any desired arrangements of the layers 3, 4, 5.

Please replace paragraph [0021] with the following amended paragraph:

[0021] Although, in a previously described rubber sleeve, the layer elements in the form of filaments/yarns or fabric structures which influence the circumferential ~~[elasticity]~~ stiffness S are in every case incorporated uniformly in the layer construction 2 in the circumferential direction (that is to say in the direction of the arrow S), according to the present invention they are incorporated in the direction of the sleeve axis X in a manner which is prestrained to various degrees, so that a non-uniform circumferential ~~[elasticity]~~ stiffness profile 6a, 6b, 6c is produced across the sleeve width.

Please replace paragraph [0022] with the following amended paragraph:

[0022] The prestraining [~~("stretching" beyond the elasticity limit)~~] of the layer elements 4 which influence the ~~[elasticity]~~ stiffness S of the sleeve is preferably carried out in a defined manner using suitable tools and producing a selected ~~[elasticity]~~ stiffness profile 6a, 6b, 6c, and is preserved by adhesive bonding on the carrier sleeve 1 by means of the adhesive layer 7. It is, however, also possible to perform the prestraining when the rubber sleeve is pulled onto the cylinder, with the disadvantage that it is no longer possible to produce the ~~[rigidity]~~ stiffness profile in such a defined or controlled manner.

Please replace paragraph [0023] with the following amended paragraph:

[0023] The term “profile” here means that different circumferential [~~elasticity~~] stiffness values S vary in the layer construction in the axial direction of the sleeve, under the condition that the profile is designed to be symmetrical with respect to the center of the sleeve width.

Please replace paragraph [0025] with the following amended paragraph:

[0025] Thus, 6a shows a “convex” [~~elasticity~~] stiffness profile of the layer construction 2, so that it is possible to compensate for the speed differences of the paper web along the press nip which result in folds forming in the paper web.

Please replace paragraph [0026] with the following amended paragraph:

[0026] In contrast, 6b shows a “concave” [~~elasticity~~] stiffness profile, while 6c shows a “doubly convex” [~~rigidity~~] stiffness profile.

Please replace paragraph [0028] with the following amended paragraph:

[0028] If the geometry of the profile 6a, 6b, 6c in the layer construction 2 of the rubber sleeve is selected carefully, a rubber blanket is obtained which has a uniform surface speed, during use, along the press nip through which the paper web runs, so that the formation of folds as a result of the varying profiles 6a, 6b, 6c is prevented, the different radial [~~rigidity~~] stiffness and compressibility values according to the prior art not being necessary.

Please replace paragraph [0029] with the following amended paragraph:

[0029] Empirical tests have shown that the best results can be achieved if the ~~[elasticity]~~ stiffness in the circumferential direction of the sleeve, compared with a ~~[rigidity]~~ stiffness which extends uniformly over the sleeve axis, has a profile in the axial direction in which the speed profile of the conveyed paper web across the web width is changed in such a way that the conveying behavior of the rubber cylinder sleeve is influenced across the web width in a range of $-0.5\% < 0 < +0.5\%$.